

Message Text

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MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: UPI INTERVIEW WITH SOVIET REP

REFERENCE: VIENNA 9563

FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF UPI STORY FILED BY JOHN LAWTON COVERING
HIS INTERVIEW WITH SOVIET REP KHLESTOV:

"THE SOVIET UNION FAVORS 'CONSIDERABLE' REDUCTIONS OF
FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE, OLEG N. KHLESTOV, CHIEF
SOVIET NEGOTIATOR AT THE VIENNA FORCE CUT CONFERENCE,
SAID TODAY.

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"WE ARE SEEKING CONSIDERABLE REDUCTIONS OF FORCES

(IN CENTRAL EUROPE),' KHLESTOV SAID IN AN INTERVIEW WITH UPI.

'THE EXACT FIGURES ARE SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATION', HE SAID. KHLESTOV SAID HE 'WOULD NOT DENY' REPORTS (CARRIED BY UPI NOV 15) THAT THE WARSAW PACT ALLIES HAD PROPOSED A SPECIFIC TIMETABLE FOR EAST-WEST FORCE REDUCTIONS IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

HE DECLINED TO GIVE DETAILS OF THE COMMUNIST PROPOSAL.

FORCE CUT CONFERENCE SOURCES SAID THE PROPOSED TIME-TABLE CALLED FOR AN INITIAL 20,000-MAN CUTBACK OF NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO) AND WARSAW PACT FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE IN 1975, FOLLOWED BY A MUTUAL FIVE PER CENT REDUCTION IN 1976 AND A FURTHER TEN PERCENT REDUCTION IN 1977.

'NATIONAL FORCES SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE FIRST STAGE', KHLESTOV SAID.

THE UNITED STATES HAS PROPOSED THAT REDUCTIONS BEGIN WITH SOVIET AND AMERICAN TROOPS STATIONED IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

KHLESTOV, 50, SAID THE PRESENT BALANCE OF FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE MUST BE MAINTAINED IN ANY CUTBACKS.

'EACH SIDE HAS DEVELOPED ITS FORCES IN EUROPE TO A LEVEL SUFFICIENT FOR ITS OWN SECURITY', KHLESTOV SAID.

'IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE THESE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF FORCES IN ORDER TO ENSURE POLITICAL STABILITY IN EUROPE', HE SAID.

ACCORDING TO THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES, NATO GROUND FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE TOTAL 777,000 MEN, COMPARED TO 871,000 FROM THE WARSAW PACT.

THE WESTERN ALLIES HAVE SAID NATO AND WARSAW PACT
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FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE SHOULD BE REDUCED TO APPROXIMATE PARITY.

KHLESTOV, A SLIGHT DAPPER MAN WITH A READY SMILE, SAID IT WAS WRONG, HOWEVER, TO DWELL ON DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES.

DURING THE HALF-HOUR INTERVIEW IN A RECEPTION ROOM AT

THE SOVIET EMBASSY HE REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE POSITIVE.

'OUR NEGOTIATIONS STARTED IN A BUSINESSLIKE FORM
AND WE BELIEVE THIS IS A GOOD STRART', KHLESTOV SAID.

HE SAID THE WARSAW PACT ALLIES WERE AIMING FOR 'QUICK
AND SUCCESSFUL RESULTS'.

THE NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH BEGAN OCT 30, INVOLVE SEVEN
NATO NATIONS -- THE UNITED STATES, BRITAIN, CANADA, THE
NETHERLANDS, WEST GERMANY, BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG -- AND
FOUR WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES -- THE SOVIET UNION, POLAND,
EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

IN ADDITION ITALY, GREECE, TURKEY, NORWAY, DENMARK,
ROMANIA, BULGARIA AND HUNGARY ARE TAKING PART AS OBSERVERS."
HUMES

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